The PALLAS SENTINEL NEWSLETTER

Vol.2 Issue 4. Feb. '84

FOTO- CARLS BRAGAS

Shock Tactics....

Hot on the heels of THE SENTINEL album comes the release of the band's second single for Harvest, "SHOCK TREATMENT". As this is also on the album, some will no doubt be concerned that already two tracks have been lifted from it. Hopefully the following explanation from the band will put your minds at rest.

"As a newly signed band, we are always eager to get new people interested in our music. The most obvious way is by the release of singles; these are our adverts so to speak. Hopefully after hearing our singles, people will feel intrigued enough to buy our albums, and come to our shows, which give a much more accurate picture of the diversity of our music. Obviously, we wish to show the band's variety on singles too, and we shall always endeavour to provide 'B' sides which are a contrast to the 'A' sides, and provide good value to people already familiar with the band.

To this end, we went to considerable bother to record "EAST-WEST" and "CROWN OF THORNS" as the 'B' side of "EYES IN THE NIGHT". Similarly, we have just returned from Highland Studios where we recorded the 'B' sides for "SHOCK TREATMENT". In response to numerous enquiries about "MARCH ON ATLANTIS, which we used to include in the old live set before ATLANTIS, we recorded it for the 'B' side of the 7". As the extra track for the 12" we chose "HEART-ATTACK" which was recently voted our most popular track by readers of "Court Jester" fanzine. We hope that these tracks will be both a contrast to the 'A' side and be of interest to both new listener and regular follower alike".

The SHOCK TREATMENT/MARCH ON ATLANTIS/HEART ATTACK 12" will be released at the end of February, catalogue No PLS2, and will feature some amazing new artwork from Patrick Woodroffe on the cover.

The Pallas Sentinel

In response to numerous enquiries, and the increased interest in Pallas, we are pleased to announce the formation of "PALLAS SENTINEL", the official Pallas "Fan Club". The aim of the PALLAS SENTINEL will be to keep you regularly informed of the band's activities, provide advance details of tour and release dates, and serve as the mail-order outlet for merchandise. The SENTINEL NEWSLETTER will be mailed out to members six times a year, regular features will include all individual profiles of band members and behind the scenes personnel, a question and answer section, competitions etc. The full package is detailed below:-

* SIX SENTINEL NEWSLETTERS PER YEAR
* ADVANCE NOTICE OF TOUR DATES
* POSTER
* BUTTON BADGE
* EXCLUSIVE MERCHANDISE
* QUESTION AND ANSWER SERVICE
* SPECIAL SENTINEL HANDBOOK DETAILING THE BANDS HISTORY

Membership of the PALLAS SENTINEL can be obtained for £3.75. The mail order form has full details.

(Please note that the membership packages will be mailed out in mid-March).

The Sentinel - The making of an album.

In this feature, the members of the band run through the tracks on the album. Unfortunately Derek was very busy moving house at the time, but I'm sure we'll hear from him in the next issue.

Eyes in the Night

Oh boy, I would get this to comment on! As most of you chaps know, this song is no spring chicken. Written in a 'fit of pique' on getting a crop of record company refusals, it was spawned at the same time as "Paris in Burning" and "Stranger on the Edge of Time", our writing these 3 singles in one evening.

What can I say. Heads down and rock, sing along you buggas, get the picture. Somewhat improved in Atlanta with a new middle 8 for the instrumental and a new intro. The song isn't a great favourite with the band on record as it has been around for so long, but is great stuff live for winding the pace up during the show.

Not much more to say except "Sorry"! Please don't send any more complaints about changing the title of the track. This was done out of necessity, legal things and all that.

Rise & Fall

Now here's a song. This, I must say is my favourite track on the album, tho' I'm not sure why. The story line actually preceeded the music, being the "history" of the Atlanteans and explaining "The Sentinels" existence, ie the domed computer which saves the Earth from Armageddon in "Atlantis". In the opening sequence, imagine a "Star Wars" type battle scene; you swoop down thro' the clouds in your fighter to see a scene of carnage below as the Atlanteans destroy each other in civil war.

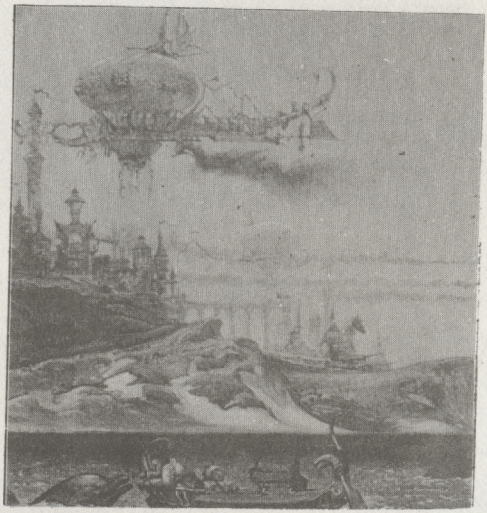
We then go to verse 1, retrospectively setting the scene.

I must admit that Euan and I enjoyed the challenge of taking the story and turning it into lyrics. We felt that a spoken monologue would complete the dramatic feel to the track and would tie it up well with Atlantis in which we had already planned to use commentary.

Live, Euan portrays a warrior from the peace loving "people of the West", telling the tale until the Armageddon phase of the song, where we all become monks for an evening to capture the mood of post-holocaust Atlantis. Euan sings on his knees on the battlefield, dying from his wounds and fallout, until the narrator talks us out of the song with Atlantis crumbling into the sea. The track ends with an amazing solo from Niall, which took many hours of torture by Eddie until he allowed Niall to put his guitar down. Sadly the fade out on the album has, for some crazy "technical" reason, cut the solo short, which for me is the one disappointment of the whole album. Don't talk to Niall about this ..... Please!!!

I feel great satisfaction with this track as I feel it really bridges the gulf between Prog Rock and H.M.; which is something I like to think Pallas' music does, moreso than any other band to date.

Graeme



The Sentinel - The making of an album.

Cut & Run

Every Pallas song has its "working title" during its infancy stage. "Cut and Run" was always referred to as "The Spy Song".

The verse and chorus pattern of "Cut and Run" was born at the same time as another Pallas song, called "Paris is Burning". As soon as they were conceived, the two songs immediately moved off at different tangents to one another, the latter becoming a cult single in its own right.

"Cut and Run" lay dormant for the best part of two years until it was time to write "The Sentinel" album.

The plot behind the "Spy Song" is losely based on Orwell's 1984 with the "thought police" in mind. In the live show Euan portrays "a state executioner", who's job is to track down and execute "enemies of the state" ie, people who think for themselves.

The musical marriage of the song was born out of the original verse-chorus pattern, written two years before and a piano piece which I had put forward. The two ideas worked well together and combined to form a very complete sounding "backbone" for what was later to become "Cut and Run". The real fun began when the "backbone" was taken to the studio in Atlanta. Before we recorded the backing track for the song, we recorded roughly 12 to 15 different arrangements onto cassette, trying different arrangements of verse, chorus and Bridge passages, before all five of us settled on the version which can now be heard on "THE SENTINEL". We wanted to combine a 1960's "spy movie" feeling with a 1984 overall flavour. To obtain this combination, I used various brass arrangements, over the "Cut and Run" bridge sections and also the slight adaptation on the James Bond theme. I feel it is also interesting to point out that at one time, we even had a little brass piece in the song, which was so authentic, that it sounded like we had flown in Earth Wind and Fire horn section. It was later replaced by Niall's "Glen Miller" Sax section which was done with his trusty "E-Bow".

I did not use the NED Synclavier on "Cut and Run". The Brass arrangements and also the string arrangements towards the end were all done on the Oberheim OBXA. The only additional keyboards on the song were the Roland JP4 for the verse patterns and the Novatron "Church Organ" towards the end. The Orchestral arrangements at the end comprises of strings, brass and church organ counterparts. The original piano piece was symphonic in structure, having theme and development sections, with use of all the instruments, the song is eventually brought to a very stirring conclusion.

Ronnie

Cold city, runs hot with pain
Knives slash your jugular vein.
Cut and Run.
There is no escape from the gun.
Tongues tie a noose around your neck
"grass stains" seal your fate.

Cut and Run.
There is no escape from the gun.

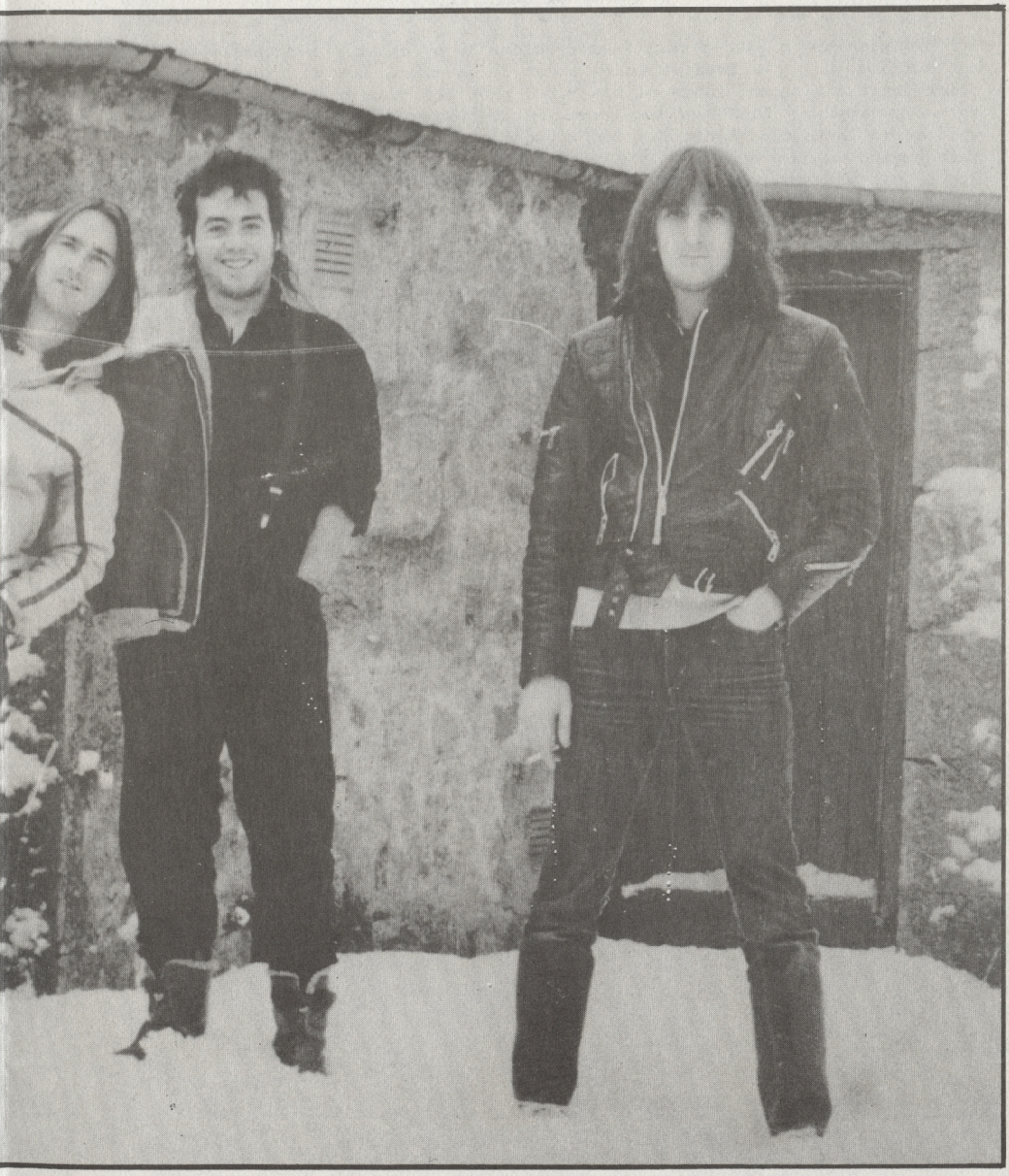
Nowhere to run
Nowhere to hide.
Run from the gun
Flee for your life.

Search, search and terminate.
We have read your mind
You are an enemy of the State.

Nowhere to run
Nowhere to hide.
Run from the gun
Flee for your life.

Assassin: "John Doe"
"I have reason to believe you are an enemy of the State, so, by virtue of the powers vested in me by the State, I am hereby obliged to terminate your existence....."

There's no business like Snow Business!



The Sentinel - The making of an album.

Arc of Infinity

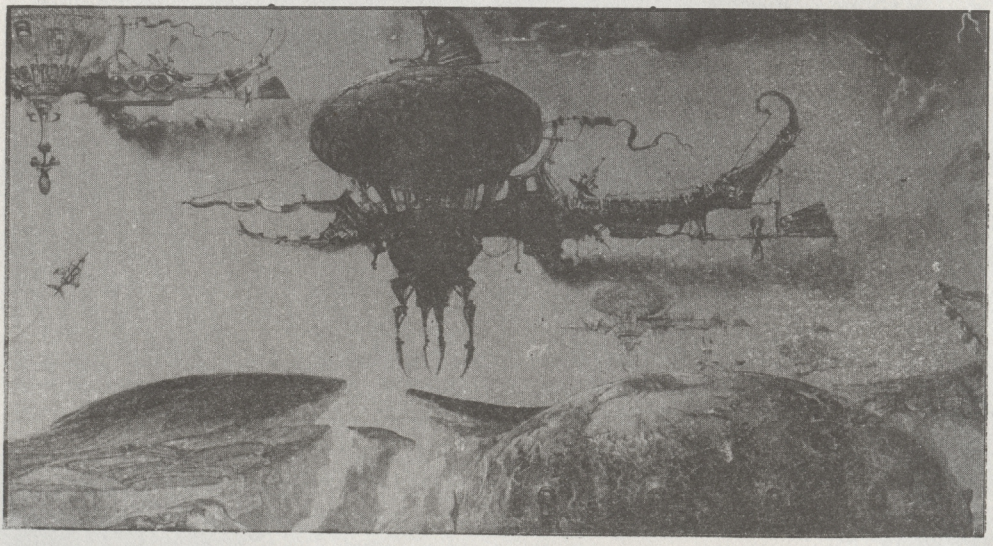
Arc of Infinity is a song that is very close to my heart. I actually woke up one morning with the idea swimming about in my mind, but it didn't actually click until the second slice of toast. I took the tune to Ronnie and between us we managed to form the backbone of the number. Ronnie and Graeme had written an instrumental section for keyboards around a pacey drum pattern and this seemed to fit well with the part that I had written, and also with the story that was now taking shape. Euan and Graeme came up with some beautiful lyrics, and Ark of Infinity was born.

Like many of our songs, there were several levels of meaning behind them, one interpretation is the idea of the last survivors on a dying planet who set sail aboard the ark into deep space to find a new home in the stars. Their course was set on the arc of infinity.

When we came to record "The Ark" in Atlanta, we wanted to create the feeling of space. I had also wanted to lay back the guitar, treating it more as a textured tone than a lead instrument, with lots of reverb and a sound that leaned towards the higher harmonics. If you listen, you can hear them ring. Ronnie at least had the chance to layer his keyboard tracks many times, giving a huge and very full sound, something he'd wanted to do for a long time. He also had another of his wishes come true when he used the NED Synclavier II on this track; it has a realism that is hard to match on other synths. Ronnie made full use of its digitally recorded instruments such as French Horn and flute. We also used the Novatron Church Organ, trings and Voices to great effect.

I used the Roland guitar synth during the "look on through space" section with the oscillators set slightly apart to give a breath of strings to the proceedings. Also hats off to Graeme for some tasteful harmony lines, and Derek for the finger bells. I hope you will enjoy listening to it as much as I did in writing and recording it.

Niall



The Sentinel - The making of an album.

Atlantis

The song, a brief history. Impressive stuff eh? I suppose the best place to start is the beginning. Back in the mists of pre-history, around June 81, during a jam in our haunted church hall, the Atlantis overture appeared out of thin air. That 1 1/2 minute section of music conjured up such vivid images of the Dome rising up through storm-tossed, and turbulant seas that a condensed version of the saga was written in literally less than 1/2 hour. Over the next 6 months to a year, Atlantis was gradually honed into shape. Along with the track itself, an entire concept was born, which as you are all no doubt aware, came to fruition with the album "THE SENTINEL".

The song Atlantis, on the surface, is fantasy, another Pallas "Musical Star Wars", but below that is a reflection of current conflict and potential destruction. Unlike "real-life", in fantasy we have "Guardian" Angels - in the shape of the Domed Computer to rescue us from ourselves.

Possibly this is the only optimistic Pallas production, possibly not, posibbly the story is not over yet?

Shock Treatment

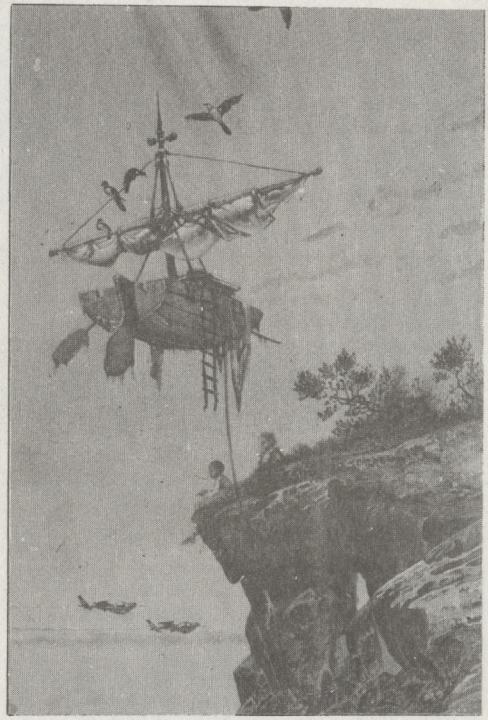
Unlike every other track on the album; which was demoed and taken to Eddie's studio in Atlanta in a complete state; Shock Treatment was conceived, written and performed on American soil. We took enough material over to complete a double album, but on listening to everything over it was felt that several tracks would benefit from further development at a later stage, and also that the album would be more complete and better balanced with the addition of a shorter and quite direct track. We obviously wanted a track that would tie in with the loose overall concept, and as "Cut and Run" was the Orwellian Hunter song, the logical conclusion was that the victims point of view be put forward.

A working title was the next problem and when "Shock Treatment" was suggested, the vital link fell into place.

We felt the song should reflect the confusion, frustration and rage that would be felt by a victim of the 1984 system, and the relentless pace of the number conveys this panic very well. The directness of this song has worked so well that it is to be released as a follow up single to the album.

Although not originally written as part of the Atlantis Suite, we all feel this song has contributed immensurably to the overall feel of the Album and that it is a further exploration of the Pallas sound.

Euan



Winter Blunderland!

Regular readers will remember that the band rehearse, and write their new material at a secret farmhouse location, deep in the Grampian countryside. In last spring's edition, the band discussed the writing of THE SENTINEL there, when it was hoped that the album would be released in summer. Despite the fact that the album has only just been released, the band have not been resting on their laurels, and have been busy writing tracks for their next magnum opus, as yet untitled, at the farm since New Year.

As you can imagine, the severe Scottish winter weather has been the cause of many a delay and mishap during January. On some days the roads were so badly blocked with snow-drifts that the farm couldn't be reached, on other occasions the blizzards were braved only to discover that there was no electricity, or water, or telephone. Another, now well known thanks to Sounds, disaster nearly occured when Graeme's car took a spin at the cowshed, denting more than Graeme's pride, and waking up the "Sounds" journalists who were paying a flying visit to interview the band in their native environment. Hope you saw the feature.

Despite these delays and diversions, the next album is already shaping up to be a fitting successor to THE SENTINEL. In fact, the hardest task is proving to be that of sorting out only the very best ideas from the wealth of good material that has emerged. Further news of the new album will be included in future issues. It is hoped that the next album will be released towards the end of the year.

One other effect of the severe weather concerned the first televising of the "EYES IN THE NIGHT" Video. Just one hour before the special feature on Grampian Television's tea-time news show, all four channels were blacked out in Aberdeen, due to a transmitter failure. With the bands luck this didn't come as too much of a suprise.

However, the Gods must have been on the band's side, as Grampian TV miraculously sprang back into life just for the duration of the band's feature, and then promptly sizzled out again .... for the next five days! All here at the Sentinel hope the pictures give you warm southerners some idea of what a REAL winter is like!!

Winter Blunderland !

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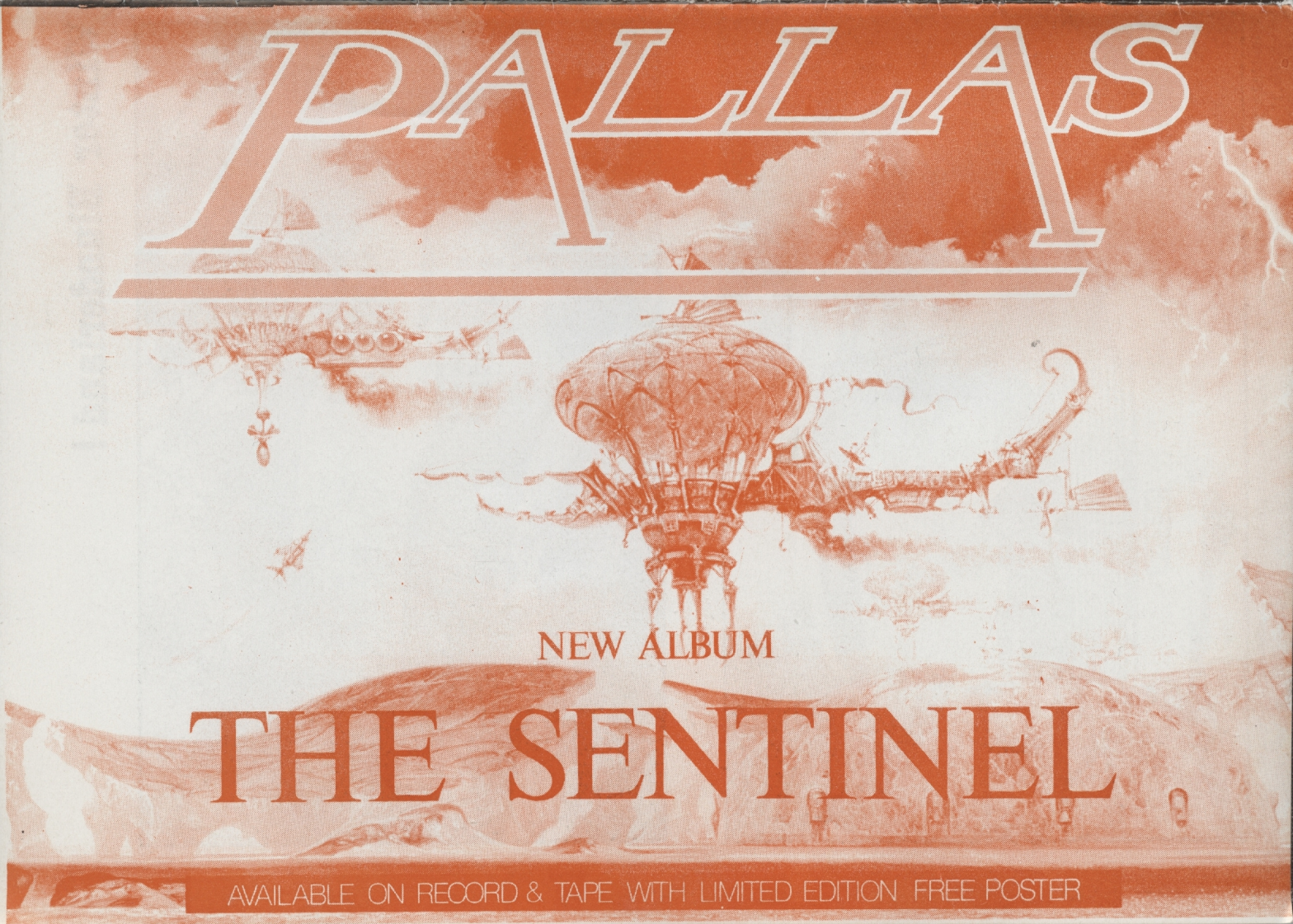

NEW ALBUM

THE SENTINEL

AVAILABLE ON RECORD & TAPE WITH LIMITED EDITION FREE POSTER

The Pallas Sentinel
91 King Street,
Aberdeen
AB2 3AB

Dear Friend,

We have pleasure in sending you Issue 4 of the SENTINEL NEWSLETTER. It certainly didn't take as long to come out as the last one! In this issue, various members of the band have written about tracks on THE SENTINEL album, and we hope that this added insight will add further to your enjoyment of the album. You may be surprised to read that the lads are already well on the way to completing the writing for the next album, but since THE SENTINEL tracks were put together last spring, it's not that surprising.

Also included in this month's edition are details of the SHOCK TREATMENT/MARCH ON ATLANTIS/HEART ATTACK 12" single, which will shortly be released. You may also be interested to hear of the "EYES IN THE NIGHT" PICTURE DISC which was released last week, and is certain to become a collectors item.

Good news for ardent followers is that the band have, at long last, secured a studio session for the Friday Rock Show. This will probably feature tracks from the album, and should be broadcast during March. On the subject of Radio One, I'm sure that the band would appreciate it if you all were to write to Tommy Vance, Anne Nightingale, Kid Jensen and Peter Powell asking to hear Pallas, as the EYES IN THE NIGHT single only got played once on the whole of Radio One, so much for the nations music channel!!

Good news too, will be the details of the Spring tour which are literally "hot off the press". The tour will be more extensive than was mentioned in the last issue .... how could we let you down! The tour will be in two legs, the first round of dates will be the large halls where the band will preview the "big production" that will be expanded for the next tour; and the second leg will be of medium sized venues, and as much of the production that will fit in will be used.

IMPORTANT NEWS:- During March, we will be setting up the PALLAS SENTINEL, the official Pallas Fan Club. Full details will be found in this month's edition of the Newsletter. There will be a membership fee of £3.75, which is a fair reflection of the costs involved. However, the band feel strongly that you, the original backbone of their support, should receive the first year's membership FREE OF CHARGE. IT IS MOST IMPORTANT THAT IF YOU WANT TO TAKE UP THIS FREE MEMBERSHIP YOU COMPLETE THE GREEN FORM ENCLOSED WITH THIS LETTER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!

Well that's nearly all, save to remind you that the first 8,000 copies of THE SENTINEL contain a free poster of the cover artwork, and to give a mention to the fanzines listed below who regularly feature the band and are thoroughly recommended.

Hope to see you on the tour.

Regards

Mike

MIKE BENTLEY

FANZINES OF INTEREST

Revelatory	Court Jester	Afterglow
42 Miller Place	145 Highfield Way	22 Blake Road
St Monans	Chorley Wood	Corby
Fife	Herts	Northants
Scotland	WD3 2PL	

Always send an SAE when writing to them, and don't forget to mention THE SENTINEL sent you.